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Some Strategic Thoughts on the Berlin Issue

The Right and Wrong Way to go to War over Berlin

The NATO aim in its effort to raise the threshold of atomic response is to cause the USSR to "pause and consider the implications of its act of aggression."

The idea, as developed in speeches and testimony by SACEUR, seems to be to create if possible a conventional capability cushion, or shock absorber, which would allow NATO to defer an immediate general atomic response to every manner and type of incursion or local act of aggression in the NATO area.

The "pause" concept presumes by its very nature, not only that the enemy is the aggressor, but also that his act of aggression includes in some form the penetration of NATO frontiers or NATO air space.

Inherent in the pause concept is the idea that NATO is on the defensive, and is willing to trade territory for time in which to discuss the implications and consequences of the Soviet act of aggression before resorting to an atomic defense.

Recently, there has been an attempt, in both the public press and officials circles, to relate the "pause" concept to the Berlin situation. The idea seems to be that NATO can, by some form of military maneuver, cause the Soviets to desist from operations to deny the West access to Berlin by forcing them to contemplate the consequences.

The truth of the matter would seem to be that, in the case of Berlin access, the NATO "pause" concept is reversed. By virtue of the geography of the Berlin situation, and of the difference in the characteristic and scope of military operations required; on the one hand to deny, and on the other hand, to reopen, access to Berlin the Soviets become the ones who can force NATO to "pause" and contemplate the consequences of any operations we might initiate to reopen access.

Access to Berlin can be denied by local Soviet/GDR military operations which do not violate NATO frontiers; do not cause NATO civilian casualties or loss of property; do not threaten NATO security or the defense capability. Article 5 of the NATO Treaty in this case would apply only if we invite an attack on our NATO forces by pushing them across East German territory towards Berlin.

Access to Berlin can only be reopened by allied military operations which involve the seizure of some East German territory; the attack of air bases and missile cities at some distance from Berlin; the probable destruction of civilians and civil property; and the severance of GDR North South lines of communications like the Elbe river. These acts would clearly invoke the defense provisions of the Warsaw Pact if they have any validity at all.

Thus, it seems very clear that military operations to reopen air or land access to Berlin, in the face of an effective Soviet or GDR

blockade, can be kept limited and hence non atomic only at the expense of certain defeat.

If we use force for more than to determine the enemy's intent to resist, we will unquestionably find ourselves faced with the alternatives of deliberately enlarging the conflict and invoking the Warsaw Pact, or accepting local defeat. At this juncture the allies will be the ones that must raise the threshold and in so doing contemplate the consequences of our actions.

Thus, the NATO "pause" concept is clearly not applicable in the case of Berlin access operations - it is in fact reversed .

Under these circumstances, the use of allied military forces in an attempt to reopen access to Berlin would make no sense. It would merely result in a general atomic war started in a location and under circumstances most disadvantageous to the allies, to include their being clearly responsible for its initiation.

If Berlin access is denied by force, the allied objective should be to create circumstances under which the Soviets, not the allies, have to either back down or initiate general war. This cannot be done by local military action in the Berlin area. It might be done, however, by reacting to a forcefull denial of access to Berlin with the progressive application of global constraints on the USSR until these become so objectionable that the USSR is forced to negotiate Berlin access in return for their removal, or seek their removal by

aggressive use of forces. If this latter course of action occurs, the "pause" concept can again be rationally applied.

We should be quite clear as to the criteria of an act of aggression responsible for general war.

If we wish to place the onus of starting a general war on the Soviets, they must be forced to initiate military operations of a scope and nature which obliges us to clearly invoke article V of our Defensive NATO Treaty.

Conversely, if the allies are placed in a position where their military operations are of a type to logically invoke the defense provisions of the Warsaw Pact, even though even though they may be in pursuit of a local objective, the onus of expanding the conflict will be charged to us by most impartial observers.

More important than "who starts the general war," is the fact that he who initiates military operations, that justify the other invoking his Defense Treaty, surrenders the strategic initiative to the other. The conclusion here is that if either the allies, or the Soviets, are faced with the need to initiate such operations, they should instead implement their strategic general war plans in the first place.

Since the allies are not likely to deliberately argue to go directly from, say, a Berlin probe to a SAC attack - whereas the Soviets might in a similar situation - our strategy must be based on exerting military pressure in places, ways, and means that will force the Soviet to escalate in a manner which would justify allied initiative in the ensuing general

war exchange.

In summary, allied strategy in response to a local Soviet effort to deny access to Berlin, should be to apply counter measures in other areas of the world in an effort to "mousetrap" the Soviet into a local situation advantageous to us in that they will then have to risk local military operations that will justify our invoking article V of the NATO Treaty. This would occur if they can be faced with an intolerable constraint (e. g. closure of the Dardanelles, etc) and a choice of relieving it by force only at the expense of:

- a) Ignominious local defeat,
- b) Starting a general war they were not ready for,

(OR)

- c) Gambling that a limited effort large enough to succeed (e. g. seizure of the strait area) would not cause us to invoke Article V, accuse them of aggression and seize the initiative in the general war that would ensue.

The attached charts indicate the right and wrong way to escalate into general war over an issue like Berlin.

The Right Way to go to War over Berlin.

<u>GDR/Soviet Action</u>	<u>Allied Reaction</u>
I GDR/Sov block autobahn to Berlin, by any means.	I Allies probe to determine that Sov. intends to deny access by force.
II Sov/GDR react to Allied probe with military forces or demolitions backed by force.	II Allies apply progressively all non military retaliatory measures available, and initiate essential airlift to Berlin.
III Sov/GDR interdicts Air LOC to Berlin with force-fighters ASMs, Electronics, etc..	III Allies begin to apply forcefull retaliatory measures globally. (e.g.) blockade straits, isolate Cuba, deny civil air transit, etc..
IV Soviets react to objectionable global constraints with local aggressive action to overcome (e.g.) escort airliners outside USSR; seize Dardanelles; attack Cuba blockade forces; etc..	IV Allies defeat local Soviet offensive to relieve intolerable allied measures with whatever force necessary, including air, sea, and missiles based outside local area.
V Soviets are faced with choice of accepting local defeat - (or) extending the war by attacking allied forces at source - If they do the latter then:	V Allies can invoke Article 5 of NATO Treaty, tag the Soviets clearly as the instigators of general war, and seize the initiative in a general war response.

The Wrong Way to go to War over Berlin

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| I | GDR/Soviets block access to Berlin by any means. | I | Allies probe Soviet intent to use force to deny access. |
| II | Soviet/GDR use of force or demolitions backed by force is established. | II | Allies launch local effort down autobahn to try and reopen access and establish airlift. |
| III | Soviet/GDR defeat local force (Bns or above) and deny airlift with fighters and ASM's. | III | Allies expand effort to reopen in preference to accepting defeat, and seek to protect air LOC by attack of missile sites and fighter bases. |
| IV | Soviet obliged to invoke Warsaw Pact by expanded allied air and land effort; accuse allies of general aggression; and seize the general war initiative. | IV | Allied forces and bases in NATO, that support the Berlin effort are hit; probably with concurrent global strikes by Soviets, thus giving then general war initiative. |